

1. Israel Detains Gaza Aid Ship, Deports Greta Thunberg**Introduction**

Israel's Foreign Ministry confirmed on June 10 that it had deported Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg after seizing the *Madleen*, a British-flagged ship attempting to deliver aid to Gaza. The ship, backed by the Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC), carried 12 passengers and humanitarian supplies from Italy.

The deportation followed Israel's recent pattern of blocking ships trying to breach its blockade of Gaza. Compared to last month's drone attack on another FFC-backed ship, the *Conscience*, the *Madleen* incident was handled with relative restraint.

**Turkey Condemns Israel's Action**

Turkey strongly criticized Israel's detention of the vessel, calling the country a "terrorist state" and labeling the action a "clear violation of international law."

Flashback: The 2010 Mavi Marmara Incident

This is not the first time a Gaza-bound aid flotilla has faced Israeli intervention. In May 2010, Israeli commandos raided the *Mavi Marmara*, a Turkish ship part of a six-vessel flotilla trying to deliver aid to Gaza. The operation led to the death of 10 Turkish activists and injured dozens more.

Israel claimed its soldiers acted in self-defence after being attacked by passengers, while a UN report found excessive force was used.

Why Was the Flotilla Headed to Gaza?

The flotillas aimed to challenge the Israeli-Egyptian blockade on Gaza, intensified since Hamas took control of the Strip in 2007. Israel feared weapons could be smuggled in and restricted goods ranging from building materials to food and fuel.

The 2010 flotilla carried 10,000 tonnes of aid, including school supplies and generators. Israel offered to inspect the cargo and deliver it via land but was rejected by flotilla organizers.

Tense Israel-Turkey Relations

Turkey was the first Muslim-majority country to recognize Israel in 1949, but ties have fluctuated. After the 2010 raid, Turkey cut diplomatic relations, and only resumed them after Israel apologized in 2013 and offered compensation.

However, the relationship has remained rocky. In 2024, Turkey again severed diplomatic ties with Israel over the continued war in Gaza.

Blockade Intensified Post-2023

The Israeli naval blockade on Gaza was further tightened after Hamas's attacks in October 2023, cutting off fuel, food, and electricity. A brief pause in January 2025 ended in March, with Israel alleging Hamas violated the ceasefire.

Conclusion

The recent deportation of Greta Thunberg and the seizure of the Madleen highlight ongoing tensions over the Gaza blockade. It also revives memories of the deadly 2010 Mavi Marmara raid, reflecting how the humanitarian and diplomatic stakes remain deeply entwined in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Issues

Source: Indian Express

2. India's Population Reaches 146.39 Crore: UNFPA Report

Introduction

According to the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) "State of the World Population 2025" report, India's population is estimated at 146.39 crore as of April 2025. The country remains the most populous nation, ahead of China (141.61 crore).

Fertility Rate Falls Below Replacement Level

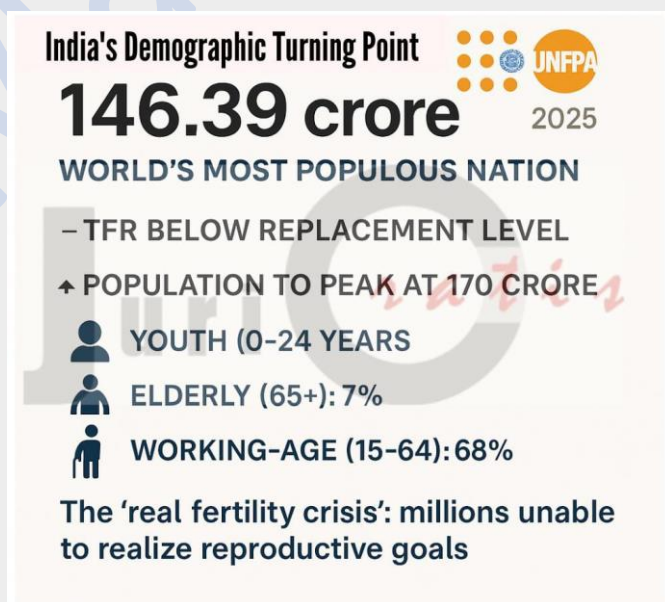
India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has dropped to 1.9, below the replacement level of 2.1.

- Replacement TFR: The number of children per woman needed to maintain the population size over generations.

- The Sample Registration System (SRS) report from 2021 had already shown a national TFR of 2.0, indicating this trend.

Population to Peak in 40 Years

The UNFPA projects that India's population will peak at 170 crore before starting to decline in around 40 years, driven by lower fertility rates and an ageing population.



Youth and Working-Age Population Dominates

India has a youth-heavy population:

- 24% are aged 0–14
- 17% are aged 10–19
- 26% fall in the 10–24 age group
- A significant 68% are in the working-age group (15–64 years)

This demographic can support economic growth, if supported with education, healthcare, and employment.

Elderly Population Rising

Currently, 7% of India's population is aged 65 and above, but this figure is expected to grow steadily with rising life expectancy:

- Life expectancy at birth is now 71 years for men and 74 years for women

The Real Fertility Crisis: Lack of Reproductive Choice

The report highlights that the real crisis is not overpopulation, but the gap between people's fertility goals and their actual outcomes.

It urges governments to focus on reproductive rights, ensuring people have the freedom and access to make informed choices about sex, contraception, and family planning.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Organisations

Source: The Hindu

3. New scheme to study crops using AI: What is CROPIC

Introduction

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare plans to launch CROPIC, a study to gather crop information using field photographs and AI-based models.

What is CROPIC?

CROPIC stands for Collection of Real Time Observations & Photo of Crops. According to the plan, crops will be photographed four-five times during their cycle, and the pictures will be analysed to assess their health and potential mid-season losses.



The study will be carried out for two seasons initially, kharif 2025 and rabi 2025-26.

How will CROPIC work on the ground?

The study envisages collection of field photographs during the crop season using a mobile application. The CROPIC mobile app has been developed by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

The photographs from the field will be crowd-sourced directly from farmers. Then, they will be analysed for information including crop type, crop stage, crop damage and its extent.

The CROPIC model will use an AI-based cloud platform for photo analysis and information extraction, and a web-based dashboard for visualisation.

Also, when compensation or insurance is to be paid to farmers, officials will collect the photographs using the CROPIC Mobile App.

What is the purpose of the study?

The agriculture ministry plans to conduct this study for the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). It will assist in creating a rich directory of crop signatures, and will also lead to automation of loss assessment and compensation to eligible farmers under PMFBY.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: Indian Express

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